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1998
1-16

FACULTY RECITAL

Margriet Tindemans, viola da gamba
Carole Terry, harpsichord

Friday, January 16, 1998
Brechemin Auditorium

Bachs & Cie.

DAT

ID-1 Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Sonata no. 3 in g minor for viola da gamba and
harpsichord, BWV 1029

Vivace
Adagio
Allegro

14'05

ID-2 Johann Sebastian Bach

Tocatta in D major for harpsichord solo, BWV 912

10'40

ID-3 Marin Marais
(1656-1728)

Suite in e minor, from Second Livre de Pieces de
Viole, 1701

Prélude
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Gigue la Badine
Tombeau pour Mr. de Ste. Colombe

15'30

Intermission

CASS side A
B

ID-4 Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach
(1714-1788)

Sonata in C major, for viola da gamba and
continuo, WQ 136

11'17

Andante
Allegretto
Arioso

ID-5 Antoine Forqueray
(1671/2-1745)

Deuxieme Suite in G major from Premier Livre
de Pieces de Viole avec la Basse Continuë, publ. 1747

16'53

La Bouron, Vivement et détaché
La Dubreüil, Louré
La Leclair, tres Vivement et detaché
Chaconne. La Buisson, Gratieusement

In the first half of the 18th century the viola da gamba reached its zenith in popularity and respectability. In its previous history an instrument used by the often very talented and dedicated amateur musicians from the nobility more often than by the professionals, it had now become an instrument for virtuosi, especially in France. Since most of the Northern European courts at that time looked to the court in Versailles as their example, the popularity of the viola da gamba and its players rapidly spread, until the middle of the 18th century, when the Italian musicians with their louder and brasher violins and violoncello's gained the upper hand.

In 1740 Hubert Le Blanc wrote a treatise called 'Defense de la basse de viole contre les entreprises du violon et les prétensions du violoncel. In it he argues against the pushy advances of the violin (and the Italian violinists), and the grating sound of the violoncello, which, he says, no person of quality and noble education could possibly find pleasing, whereas the beautiful bass viol (and its French players) knows how to make the poetry, inherent in French music, sing. This concert presents the argument for the viol, which in the hands of someone such as Marin Marais could sound as if played by an angel, but in the hands of Antoine Forqueray sounded more like a devil.

Johann Sebastian Bach wrote three sonatas for viola da gamba and obligato harpsichord. It is interesting to note that for the older instrument, the viol, he uses the newer forms of the Italian Sonata and the Concerto, whereas in the Suites for the new and upcoming instrument, the violoncello, he sticks to the old French Dance Suite. The Third Sonata is written in the form of a Concerto with a fast - slow - fast pattern of three movements. The second movement with its long spun melodies is one of the most beautiful works ever written for the viola da gamba.

Marin Marais, the father of all masters on the viol, spent most of his professional life at the French court, as a member of the royal orchestra and from 1679 on, as Ordinaire de la chambre du Roi pour la viole. Besides operas and chamber music his most important legacy are the five collections of Pieces de viole , published between 1686 and 1725, for one, two, and three bass viols with continuo. Pieces are grouped in sets of the same key, in no particular order, and no regular length: some sets include 7 movements, others 41! Rousseau , in his Traité, talks about the 'jeu de mélodie' as opposed to the 'jeu d'harmonie' as two different style of playing the viol. The first one uses the viol as a melodie instrument, expressing all manners of affect by single line melodies, aided only by ornaments and an occasional chord at cadences. The 'jeu d'harmonie' is closer to the style of the French lute-players, a combination of melodie and chords, enabling the use of counterpoint and more part writing. Marais uses both in his compositions, although he favors the harmonic style. The E minor Suite follows the classic pattern of Prelude - Allemande - Courante - Sarabande - Gigue, and ends with a heartbreaking lament (Tombeau) on the death of Marais' teacher Monsieur de Ste. Colombe.

In the *Mercure de France* of August 1738 the following paragraph was written about Antoine Forqueray: 'He appeared to the world at the time when this swarm of Italians roused astonishing rivalry in France. He wanted to do on the viol everything they did on the violin and he succeeded.....'. He is praised because of his witty and daring way of playing, but chastised because he wrote pieces so difficult that only he or his son could play them! He trained his son Jean-Baptiste so well that he threatened to become a better player than his father, at which point Antoine had his son arrested and thrown in prison! In spite of this unfatherly act, Jean-Baptiste went on to publish his father's works posthumously, albeit with his own fingerings and bowings, and with the addition of some of his own compositions.

In spite of the fact that the viola da gamba was no longer very popular in Germany around the middle of the century, several composers in Berlin (among them C.P.E.Bach) were still writing for it. This was mainly because one of the great viol players of all times, Ludwig Christian Hesse, was employed at the court of Frederick the Great. Frederick himself was not greatly enamoured of the music of J.S.Bach, which he found artificial and too religious, nor of that of Bach's son, which he found too emotional, but his youngest sister, Princess Anna Amalia of Prussia, engaged C.P.E.Bach as music master. Ludwig Hesse's father, Ernst Christian, also a gamba player, had studied in Paris with Forqueray. Music was for C.P.E.Bach the reflection of the human mind and heart and its emotions. The Sonata in C Major was written in 1745. Dramatic tension and expressiveness is achieved by sudden contrasts of dynamics, tempo and tonality.

Program notes : Margriet Tindemans